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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES/METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

27 May 1953

TO: []

FROM: []

SUBJECT: Albania

Reference: Our telephone
conversation of
27 May 1953.

I attach to this memorandum three questions to which we believe here it is both of importance and urgency to receive an answer from an official source, preferably from a prominent Administration official who could be quoted by name. It is desirable, but not essential, that the answers (if they can be given) should be provided in time for our anniversary broadcast to Albania on 1 June; however, since the matter is of such general significance, it will be almost equally useful if we can receive a reply any time during the next week or two.

Contained in the same attachment, simply for your guidance, are drafts of the type of answer we would hope it might be possible to provide.

I bring this matter to your attention at this time because of our belief that the stage is now set, for the first time, for a liberation of Albania by internal forces (externally aided); and because of our fear that unless something is done to strengthen the hand and prestige of the Albanians who lean towards the West, and with whom we are in contact, it is more than likely that any liberation that may take place would be brought about by the forces supported by Tito and not by the forces which the United States would like to see return to power in that strategically crucial area.

While, as in any such situation, our conclusions must rest more on possibilities than on proof, nevertheless there are a number of factual pointers that lead me to think that our considered opinions (as above) should be taken seriously and, if they do merit serious consideration, that the matter is of definite urgency. Let me list these factors below:

First, as to the present possibility of liberation: It has always been our opinion here that possibilities of revolt in Albania were very small as long as the probability remained that Albania's neighbors, Greece, Yugoslavia and even Italy, would take advantage of internal dissension to partition the country and eliminate it as a sovereign power. Some time ago the Italians renounced any such ambition and, although it is evident that the Greeks are still unhappy about the situation in Northern Epirus, nevertheless the Italian announcement was followed by some indication in Greece that it was

governmental policy not to press the Northern Epirus issue. Now, the very recent Istanbul pronouncement of Moshe Pijade (the [] of Tito) is interpreted here as meaning the definite abandonment by Yugoslavia of any claim to add Albania to Yugoslavia as an additional "autonomous" republic and also as thinking preliminary to a lining up of the Balkan Entente behind the idea of full sovereignty and integrity for a liberated Albania. This we believe will be tremendously encouraging to Albanian liberation movements within the country, no matter what their shade of political opinion; on the other hand, we see it as a Tito initiative that may have consequences desirable mainly to Tito, as outlined below.

Second, as to the Tito danger: I do not have to detail here why a liberated Albania that looked to Belgrade for support and guidance is less desirable from the American point of view than an Albania liberated by the forces who would accept guidance from those Albanians with whom we are now in contact. It is of course well known that Tito has his own ideas and his own forces for the liberation of Albania, and that he has opposed the previous indications of activity based on other neighboring countries. Since Tito's visit to London (and whether as a result of a go-ahead received in London we shall probably never know) his efforts for the liberation of Albania have shown new signs of activity. Particularly significant, I believe, is the information that we have received that a Titoist officer in Italy has recently, in collaboration with a British officer, been contacting various individuals in the Albanian emigration. It seems that Americans and the National Committee for a Free Albania have been deliberately excluded from these conversations and we can only assume that this was done with intent on the part of both the British and the Yugoslavs concerned. We regarded this as a threatening development even before the news of Pijade's statement came out of Istanbul; the two together form a pattern that is too striking to be ignored.

I share the opinion of my radio and propaganda staffs that the campaign aimed at Albania has, in any case, now developed to the point where an official United States Government position, making the points that I have outlined in the proposed answers contained in the attached memorandum, is most desirable in order to push forward the desire and hope for liberation within Albania. In the new circumstances it seems to me to take on a quite different urgency and would be highly desirable in order to show that the United States is not only thinking of Albania as much as Tito is but can offer much more than he can. By Channeling such a statement to NCFE and thereby through NCFE to the National Committee

for a Free Albania the United States Government can further help to increase the position and the prestige of those Albanians with whom we are in contact and who firmly reject the idea of a liberated Albania which would remain communist and merely switch its subservience from Moscow to Belgrade.

I am sure you are fully aware that Albania has a very special position in the Satellite system in that Moscow has consistently avoided any firm military commitment there. Albania is not tied to Moscow or to the other Satellites by any military assistance pacts, ~~nor is it a member of the Cominform.~~ In its geographical situation Albania is to Moscow what West Berlin is to the Western Allies; yet, in seeming anticipation of eventual loss, Moscow has not given to Albania the guarantees that have been given through NATO to Western Berlin. I make these points only to emphasize how small is the risk to United States' prestige and policy in giving from an official source the answers that we are here asking for; on the other side, the advantages to be gained by the publication of such answers are in our opinion very great.

... , except the mutual security pact signed with Bulgaria December 16, 1947 under guidance of Tito before his break with the Cominform; but Albania is not a member of the Cominform.

To substantiate myth of new Soviet policy change to peaceful reconciliation, Zachariades, whose picture was still displayed in Sofia as late as

May Day celebrations and who thus was altogether too prominent for his own safety, had to go.

Li Li-san, too, enjoyed Stalin's endorsement while the dictator lived, but he foolishly irritated his one-time subordinate Mao Tse-tung who today is in positions to bargain with Moscow and who has disposed of the displeasing Mr. Li.

B. SPOT NEWS

1. Concerning the French Cabinet crisis, RFE holds with NY Herald Tribune that: "the free (and enslaved-PL) nations can draw comfort from the fact that basic French foreign policies are more stable, on the whole, than French cabinets, and will look to see France represented at the conference by a statesman of vigor and vision appropriate to the needs of his country and the troubled world".
2. Tito's Batajnica speech does not call for comment; it is best reported straight.
3. Note Kaskeline feature on European transportation pool in Christian Science Monitor of May 21st.
4. For Albanian Desk only: Ankara reports following statement by Mosa Pijade, vice president of Yugoslavia, at present in Turkey: "We don't want to meddle in Albanian affairs, but we don't want others to meddle into them either. A guarantee of Albania's territorial integrity and sovereignty by the three countries in the Balkans Pact might have useful results, and would fit in with our basic principle: the Balkans for the people of the Balkans." This certainly seems newsworthy though perhaps not yet commentary material.

A. CONTINUING CAMPAIGNS

I. Cold War:

- a-1) Announcement of projected Big-Three meeting has naturally aroused world-wide wave of journalistic speculation on reasons for meeting and probable agenda. Most of this speculation can be disregarded. Best lead is official White House statement that "a primary purpose will be further to develop common viewpoints with these friends on the many problems that must be solved co-operatively so that the cause of world peace may be advanced". In other words, Washington emphasis is on unity of leading Western powers. NY Herald Tribune entitles its lead edit today "Western Unity First" and comments: "That unity, in a broad sense, is still one of the great facts of international relations today. Much of the dissension which has appeared of late is superficial, or at most does not constitute any real obstacle to Western collaboration". And the NY Times says: "Its (the meeting's) greatest importance just now is as a move to strengthen Western co-operation. The world is clearly at one of those critical turns that call for the most wise and careful handling..". It is Eisenhower's determination to maintain the strongest possible common front against the enemy which has led him to call Bermuda meeting for purpose of ironing out any existing differences of opinion - not on basic principles, but on methods and timing - among Big Three. In the words of Dulles at New Delhi today: "We have sought and will continue to seek the opinions of other nations. We will take these opinions into account in making our own policies". And the TIMES sums up situation with: "The crucial point is that the conferees can talk freely and frankly to one another, certain that their fundamental ideas, not only the concepts they hold but the language they speak, have the same meaning... Agreement with Russia will always be secondary to, and dependent on, the unbreakable unity of the leaders of the free world."

Favorable free-world reaction to meeting indicates general acceptance of wisdom of Eisenhower proposal and unified support of US leadership in fight for a just peace. Bonn spokesman, for instance, said: "We welcome the Bermuda talks since we expect reaffirmation of the common foreign political aims of the West". In New York General Ridgway, although speaking for himself, stated the case well in these words: "In the fight NATO is making for peace by peaceful means it is of vital importance that our political author-

ities shall have their voices in negotiations between East and West backed by the force which potential aggressors recognize...If and when there is reliable evidence in actions, not words, of a major abatement of Soviet Russian hostility toward the West, with a concurrent and corresponding reorientation of its policy of seeking to subvert other governments, then and only then might a resurvey of our position perhaps justify a lesser effort.

- a-2) Current talks among Burma, US., and Nationalist China concerning withdrawal of some 12,000 Chinese Nationalist troops who were driven onto Burmese territory during Soviet-sponsored communist conquest of China, demonstrates manner in which differences among free nations are decently settled by peaceful negotiations. Settlement of this friction source will be contribution toward pacification of Southeast Asia.
- b) Big play being given by Prague radio and press to request for lifting of US sanctions confirms our remarks of yesterday on weak condition Czech economy as result double pressure of Soviet exploitation and US reprisals for hostile Prague regime actions. It is noted that when US State Department press officer was asked whether words of Eisenhower letter to Zapotocky meant there was a "deal" for Oatis' freedom, he replied that this was not correct, that President Eisenhower had said only that the release of Oatis would remove obstacles in the way of negotiations and that this was a fact and not a bargaining counter.

II. Western Values in Practice

Example of way in which free peoples are cooperating together to raise their living standards is found in fact that of forty countries participating in UN Technical Assistance Administration last year, more than half were themselves in process of development. This process by which the various peoples share their special skills and resources is fully outlined in UN report just published. Activities range from development of water resources to experiments with new types of building materials.

III. Debunking the Enemy

Two more developments which may be traced to Stalin's death and resultant continuing power struggle within Kremlin are apparent in purgings of Nicholas Zachariades, Greek communist leader and Li Li-san, chairman of Chinese Communist Trade Union Federation. Zachariades, long-time secretary general of Greek CP, was too clearly a Stalin man to suit whoever rules USSR.

GREECE

Dec. 18, 1952

PAPAGOS DETAILS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM

Athens, Greek Home Service, Dec. 17, 1952, 1720 GMT--M

(Government Policy Statement by Premier Papagos, Relayed from the Chamber of Deputies)

Excerpts from Text

In the same spirit the administration looks with confidence toward the cultivation and further tightening of relations with Yugoslavia, and will exert every possible effort to make this cooperation complete because this country, together with Greece and Turkey, is the most advanced outpost of the free world. For the sake of peace and the development of the Balkan peoples, this administration wishes to see the rest of its northern neighbors free and in friendly relations with Greece.

Particularly as regards Albania this administration desires to stress that, consistent to the line laid down by the congress of the peace in 1946, it rejects any force, and aims only at legal international means for the settlement of the northern Epirus issue. It also wishes that it may see a new, independent and democratic Albania which will be equally friendly to its neighbors. (Applause)

May 26, 1953

In connection with a special broadcast to be held on the Second Anniversary of the opening of the Albanian Station of Radio Free Europe, the National Committee for a Free Europe would like to obtain an official reply to the following questions:

1. Does the United States Government agree with the concept that a liberated Albania should take its rightful place within the Balkan Entente?
2. Does the United States Government concur in recent statements made by members of the Balkan Entente that a liberated Albania should retain its territorial integrity and full national sovereignty? ~~The Albanians, however, one knows, that their national sovereignty is the decision made by the Great Powers of 1913 and later confirmed by the Conference of Ambassadors of Paris~~
3. (NCFE Note: This question is prompted by Moshe Pijade's recent statement in the last few days in Istanbul.) Would a liberated Albania be eligible for the same aid and assistance that has been extended by the United States Government to the members of the Balkan Pact?

In the NCFE's opinion, the following are the sort of answers that the Albanian listening public would wish to receive if it proves politically possible to give these answers:

1. Yes. While the U.S. Government regards this as primarily a matter for the members of the Balkan Pact, it would certainly look with favor on such a development.

2. Certainly.

3. In the development of U.S. foreign aid program, it has always been the intention of the U.S. Government that additional countries, when they liberate themselves from the Soviet yoke, shall be eligible for immediate aid and assistance. The Mutual Security Act of 1953 so provides. A liberated Albania would, therefore, certainly be eligible for the kind of assistance that it would immediately require to reconstitute its national life and its economy which has suffered so greatly from Soviet exploitation.

Although the original intention is to have these answers in time by Monday, June 2, nevertheless, if any delay should intervene, it would be desirable to have them at any time in the near future.